



Great Lakes Fire Update Thursday April 27, 2023

Hours: 8 am-8 pm **Phone:** (252) 285-6174 **Email:** 2023.GreatLakes@firenet.gov

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwecg.gov/incident-information/ncncf-great-lakes>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nfsnc/>

Join us for an in-person community meeting this evening, Thursday, April 27th, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Creekside Elementary School, 2790 Landscape Drive, New Bern. This meeting will also be hosted virtually on Facebook Live at <https://fb.me/e/5RLxG0dUj>.

We have had many offers of donations to firefighters. We are grateful for your support, but currently do not have the capacity for processing and storing donations on site. In lieu of donations to the Great Lakes Fire please consider making a monetary donation to the [Wildland Firefighter Foundation](#).

Great Lakes Fire: The Great Lakes Fire, located within Croatan National Forest, one mile South-Southeast of New Bern, started on April 19th. The fire is suspected to be human-caused and is still under investigation. It is burning in pocosin swamp and mixed fuels within and around the footprint of the 2012 Dad Fire, which burned roughly 21,331 acres. Previous prescribed burning by the U. S. Forest Service helped slow fire spread by reducing the amount of burnable vegetation. No structures have been lost and none are currently threatened.

Acreage: 32,400 acres **Containment:** 30%

Personnel and Equipment: 206 total personnel; 4 Helicopters, 16 Type-6 Engines, 19 Type-2 Tractor Plow Units, 1 Fixed Wing Aircraft, 2 tracked vehicles, and 2 Ambulances.

Today: Firefighters continue to construct new primary and secondary contingency lines to increase protection on the north end and help protect surrounding communities. They are also reinforcing firelines west and south of the fire to protect forested areas and Weyerhaeuser timberlands. Firefighters continue to flood areas in the southeast of the fire to saturate organic soils where the fire is burning deep into the ground. They are raising the water level in canals by blocking culverts to do this. The eastern side of the wildfire has shown little smoke during reconnaissance flights, so is in monitoring status. We are using drones to detect heat with infrared cameras. We continue to work closely with the National Weather Service and cooperating agencies. Operational resources include personnel from the U.S. Forest Service, N.C. Forest Service, and Weyerhaeuser Corporation. Initial attack firefighters assigned to the incident are on standby and are ready to respond to new fire starts on and around the Great Lakes Fire.

Natural resource experts are on scene to provide advice and make sure that suppression efforts do not destroy the beautiful natural resources on the Croatan National Forest. They evaluate plowed firelines in advance to reduce damage to wildlife and endangered plants. The advisors also work with air operations separating helicopter dip sites to reduce the spread of alligator weed from one part of the fire to another. They also have a plan to clean equipment to reduce the spread of noxious plants from one area to another.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Rainfall varied tremendously overnight with the south end receiving only .06” while the north end received .67”. This is still not enough to extinguish the fire. Relative humidity is predicted at 65-70% with light winds out of the east. Expect clearing and drying through the afternoon although an isolated shower cannot be ruled out. A strong low-pressure system will impact the area Friday bringing periods of showers and thunderstorms. Some storms could bring gusty winds and hail. Another strong front is expected to impact the area on Sunday. Fire behavior is not expected to change due to the weather.

Air quality: Information on current air quality data for North Carolina is at <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

Closures: Road closures on County Line Road and Catfish Lake Road remain in effect. Updates to road closures surrounding the fire is at <https://drivenc.gov/>.

Temporary Flight Restriction: A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place over the fire area; information is at [Federal Aviation Administration](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/tfrs/) website. This is necessary to protect aerial operations. If there are intrusions into the Temporary Flight Restrictions, we must stop aerial operations.